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ABSTRACT

Teacher evaluation is required before, during, and immediately after preservice education to insure a high level of teacher accountability. Personal motivation must be understood before one chooses the profession. Admission criteria to teacher preparation programs must be strengthened so that only proper candidates are selected. Professional coursework must be relevant to later needs and not merely an academic exercise involving recall and comprehension of reading and lectures. Clinical experiences should also be evaluated by explicit, strict criteria. Diagnostic feedback should follow the taking of a test for certification. It is recommended that objectives that are explicit should be questioned with respect to their relationship to teacher practice. Those that are implicit should, to the degree possible, be made visible so that they, too, can be examined publicly. (HFG)

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Preservice Teacher Evaluation: An Overview

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Despite chronic and widespread concern about the professional abilities of teachers surprisingly little attention is being devoted to issues of evaluating these abilities at the preservice level. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, when performance/competency based teacher education (P/CBTE) was in vogue, the time seemed ripe for assessing teachers' abilities to perform in classrooms. "Accountability" was on the tip of every other tongue, and competency statements made evaluation of teacher performance feasible in ways that were not previously thought possible. But P/CBTE programs were long on training and short on assessing its effects; thus the potential such programs offered for discriminating among more effective and less effective teachers was never realized, and public confidence in teachers and teacher education, never high, dropped even lower. Teacher educators, it seemed, failed to explain how decisions were made about what teachers had to know and do in order to be successful.

The purpose of this paper is to explore teacher evaluation as it typically occurs before, during, and immediately after preservice education. In order to do so, we address the following questions: What is being assessed at each stage of a preservice teacher's development? What evaluation methods are typically employed? How are the results of evaluations used? We also discuss what objectives, methods, and uses of evaluation results appear to be downplayed or absent in preservice teacher education programs.

Preservice teacher evaluation can be described in terms of the three general phases listed in Table 1: evaluation that occurs before formal preparation, during a teacher education program, and at the end of training. We have divided each phase into two steps or identifiable points at which evaluation may occur. Phase one, or that period before formal preparation, consists of self and career evaluation and evaluation as assessment for admission to a teacher education program. Phase two, the period of time in training, consists of the evaluation of professional coursework and appraisal of clinical experiences. Phase three represents that period at the end of formal preparation up to and including evaluation for hiring.

Insert Table 1 here

Evaluation of Self and of Training as a Career The first step in evaluating preservice teachers, and one that is often overlooked, is that of self evaluation before entering a formal program of teacher education. Although most people considering teaching as a career probably assess their own interests, abilities, and personal needs in relation to the perceived advantages and disadvantages of being a teacher, this process has not traditionally been characterized as particularly rational or objective. The observation Waller (1932) made a half-century ago may be more relevant today than people realize or care to admit. He suggested that prospective teachers' career decisions "are distorted by wishful thinking, altered to conform to the prevalent stereotype, colored by fancy. It is the logic of the impulses that finally determines choice." (1932, p. 378).

Teachers and teaching, of course, have changed since Waller's time, and through the years, the literature and folk wisdom on teaching as a career choice have suggested a variety of reasons why people have become teachers. As hackneyed as recruiting brochures have made it sound, people have been drawn to teaching by their desires to help others learn and to continue their own intellectual growth. They have watched the strong role model--the mentor to be emulated--and have been motivated to become role models themselves. As Stephens (1967) noted, people may have been drawn to teaching, at least in part, because it has offered opportunities to act on their natural tendencies to be playful: for some, being a schoolteacher has been a way to have fun and to get paid at the same time.

Some apparently entered teaching as a compromise--unable, for example, to be an artist but able to teach about art. Others no doubt viewed teaching as insurance against the possibility of not being accepted to law or medical school, or as an opportunity to support themselves while working toward other goals. The Vietnam War and draft deferments for teachers provided yet another set of reasons for young men in the 1960s and early 1970s to make teaching, if not a career, at least a job worth a second look. During those war years, many young men and women seemed to share a sense of mission--a commitment to do something that "made a difference." Apparently for some, teaching was that kind of something.

If people's decisions about teaching careers have been influenced by a variety of external forces, as indeed it would appear, the influence of their parents in these decisions has been somewhat unclear. Surveys indicate that for a time at least, teaching was viewed by parents as a viable career choice for their children. In two studies conducted twelve years apart, four out of five parents surveyed said they would encourage a daughter to enter

teaching, but less than half reported that they would do the same for a son (Auster and Molstad, 1957; Pounds and Hawkins, 1969). As we note below, there is good reason to think that parents may no longer hold such opinions.

According to periodic surveys of teachers themselves (Bartholomew and Gardner, 1982), the predominant reason for becoming a teacher is a desire to work with young people. Approximately 70 percent of the respondents in surveys conducted since 1971 have selected this reason for entering teaching. Other reasons mentioned frequently for choosing a teaching career include people's feelings about the value or significance of education in society and job security. Increasing percentages of teachers, however, are deciding to enter teaching because of their interest in a subject matter field (34.5 percent in 1971 and 44.1 percent in 1981), because of the influence of a teacher in elementary or secondary school (17.9 percent in 1971 and 25.4 percent in 1981), and because of the long summer vacation (14.4 percent in 1971 and 21.5 percent in 1981).

In the last few years, however, it has become relatively easy to find reasons for not selecting a career in teaching. Opportunities for women in other professions have increased making teaching only one among many career choices available. Public esteem of teachers has diminished. Teaching jobs are in short supply, and reports of violence and vandalism in schools have made the workplace much less appealing than it was in the past (Sykes, 1981). If people take these factors into account when considering a career in teaching, it is little wonder that as Weaver (1978) has noted, the size and academic quality of the teacher selection pool have diminished.

However imprecise self and career evaluation may be, the processes most likely begin long before a career decision is made and continue long after teachers have been on the job. As Lortie (1975) noted, teaching, unlike other occupations, is highly visible to children. They live and work with teachers day-in and day-out for at least twelve or thirteen years. The kind of knowledge gained from these experiences is not usually available to people who select other occupations. Even though teachers-to-be may underestimate the difficulties of the job, Lortie contended that this fact supports, not negates, the idea that prospective teachers form definite ideas early on about the roles they will play. No doubt some people who consider teaching careers evaluate the profession and their own place in it long before they make a decision.

Evaluation for Admission to a Teacher Preparation Program Admission to a teacher preparation program constitutes the second step in the evaluation of prospective teachers. Selection occurs at different times, depending on the institution. According to a survey of over 200 institutions, approximately 20 percent admit students as early as the freshman year, while other institutions (approximately nine percent) wait until the fifth year (Joyce, Yarger, Howey, Harbeck, and Kluwin, 1977). This survey also revealed considerable variability in the factors considered in the selection process. Those most commonly cited--used by more than one-third of the institutions --were grade point averages (GPA), recommendations, English proficiency, and interview results.

College GPA, or some other indicant of scholastic ability, is by far the most important factor in the selection process. In a 1972 study of 180 AACTE member institutions, Carpenter found that 48 percent of the institutions use a 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale) as the criterion level for admission, and 93 percent of the institutions had a criterion level between 2.0 and 2.5. Ten years later Shields and Daniel (1982) noted that "studies generally support the widely held view in the academic community that teacher training programs admit almost anyone who meets minimum entrance requirements."

Recommendations, too, appear to be quite important in making admissions decisions. As Carpenter (1972) pointed out, however, whenever this information is weighed heavily in an admissions decision, "this remains one person's opinion and may lead to the exclusion of teaching potential or to the imposing of mediocrity: either one or the other, or both."

The quality of some information used to assess candidates' abilities to use the English language also appears to be somewhat suspect. According to the results of both the Joyce et. al. (1977) survey and the Carpenter (1972) survey less than 20 percent of institutions use standardized examinations. Other sources of information that are used to establish English proficiency are grades in English classes, interviews, and appraisals of English ability in recommendations. Data available on the level of English proficiency required are generally given by comparisons of prospective teachers to other groups on standardized examinations. These well-publicized comparisons show that education majors score substantially lower than other students. In one study, Watkins (1981) noted that the average verbal SAT score of prospective education majors was 389 compared to the nation average of 424.

In his review of research on criteria used for admissions decisions, Schalock found not only that "the criteria tend to be

minimal" but also "in all but a few cases [they] are used without any assurance that they relate to effectiveness as a teacher." (1979, p. 367) Schalock places the blame for the critical appraisal of selection criteria on the economics of teacher education. When there were shortages of teachers in the 1950s and 1960s, the marketplace worked against the use of stringent selection criteria. Now demand for teachers has diminished, but lower enrollements in teacher preparation programs do not automatically mean that selection criteria will be strengthened. In fact, the converse may be true: lower enrollments may mean lower admission standards.

There is one final point with respect to evaluation for admission that bears noting. Failure to be admitted to a program can be reversed. Applicants may be encouraged to reapply if the reason for rejection is a low grade point average. In such cases, students who were just below the minimum GPA can take courses that raise the GPA to just above the minimum level, reapply, and be accepted.

Evaluation of Professional Coursework The great mystery in preservice teacher evaluation is how professional coursework is appraised. Joyce et. al. (1977) state "the evaluation of students in programs is done primarily by the instructors, with few exceptions across departments." Of the programs responding to their survey, 86 percent indicated that professional coursework was evaluated by instructors, one percent indicated that evaluation was done by a committee of instructors, and five percent indicated that evaluation was done through criterion-referenced tests keyed to individual statements of competency. Observing that the majority of programs in their survey indicated the existence of written competency statements, Joyce and his colleagues concluded that the partial implementation of competency-based programs indicated that the evaluation of teacher competency had never been actualized. If this conclusion were accurate in 1977, the fog enveloping evaluation of professional coursework can only be said to be thicker today.

The freedom afforded instructors in higher education to plan courses and evaluate students makes the above observations hardly surprising. Furthermore, it may also explain the scarcity of information on what preservice teachers are held accountable for and how they are evaluated. Suggesting to a college instructor that you would like to study his evaluation methods would most likely be taken as an invasion of privacy. One would more likely be allowed to study the furniture arrangement in his or her bedroom. Four factors, however, suggest (and only suggest) that the primary

foci of evaluation are the recall and comprehension of material from readings and lectures. First, these are the traditional foci of academic evaluation, and there is little evidence to indicate any departure from this tradition. Second, complaints from teacher education graduates persist that the substance of coursework was irrelevant to their later needs; if the focus of evaluation in professional coursework were on the application of content, for example, one would expect fewer complaints about irrelevance. Third, systematic assessment of learning beyond the knowledge and comprehension levels is a difficult and time-consuming enterprise, and therefore rarely undertaken. Fourth, studies correlating grades in professional studies with ratings of supervisors in the field yield coefficients that are usually not significantly different from zero.

None of these factors, when viewed alone or in combination, demonstrates what is being evaluated in professional education studies or how evaluations are being made. They suggest, however, a reasonable hypothesis that the focus of preservice teacher evaluation during professional coursework--at least that coursework which is not accompanied by clinical experiences--is on the recall and comprehension of readings and lectures. This hypothesis, of course, needs to be tested.

Evaluation of Clinical Experiences Student teaching experiences and supervised practice of teaching are generally considered to be the most valuable education opportunities by teacher preparation students (Lortie, 1975), and there is evidence that such opportunities are increasing in college programs (National Center for Education Statistics, 1977). The evaluation of these experiences, both formative and summative, however, appears to be limited. Howey, Yarger, and Joyce (JTE, vol 29) report that the average student teacher is observed and counseled six to seven times by college personnel during his formal student teaching period. Although teacher educators seem to be concerned with comprehensive and detailed evaluation of clinical experiences, relatively little progress has been made in this direction (McDonald, 1978).

One rather interesting way to determine what is being evaluated in student teaching is to ask student teachers what they think it takes to succeed. Sorenson (1967) did so with a group of student teachers in high school by asking them to "list the things you would tell your best friend to do in order to get a grade of 'A' from your present training teacher."

Sorenson's results are interesting not only because subjects

appeared to be quite candid, but because they seemed to reflect a preoccupation with the routinization of teaching. Approximately 50 percent of the respondents noted the importance of preparing lesson plans. Another 40 percent said that student teachers must "listen very carefully to the supervising teacher's suggestions and follow them without question." The other factor mentioned most frequently (by 28 percent of the respondents) was the necessity of maintaining "absolute control." Some 24 percent noted the importance of creativity and variety in teaching. Beyond these responses, student teachers suggested that success was dependent on using pupil-initiated activities (15 percent), using teacher-directed activities (12 percent), being familiar with subject matter (15 percent), being enthusiastic (9 percent), acting like you know what you are doing (9 percent), being prompt (9 percent), keeping the room neat and clean (5 percent), being courteous, formal, attractive, and having a low, distinct, convincing voice (3 to 6 percent).

Based on these student responses, Sorenson drew the following conclusions:

> 1. Two student teachers who plan to teach the same subject but who have been assigned to different supervising teachers may be taught quite different, even inconsistent, methods and principles. 2. There is a great gap between the content of professional courses and the activities of student teaching. 3. A student's grade in practice teaching probably depends in large part on whether he is well matched or mismatched with his supervising teacher [in terms of] concepts of the teacher's role, and such personality variables as dependence versus independence. 4. Practice teaching does not appear to provide the prospective teacher with a theoretical framework for use in planning and evaluating his own instructional activities. The entire emphasis seems to be on the learning of routines for getting through the day...

Because Sorenson's study appears to be unique in its examination of student teaching evaluation practices from the points of view of students themselves, we attempted to replicate it. In our case, however, the sample was much smaller (45 compared to Sorenson's 163), and it included both elementary and secondary school student teachers.

Given these differences, and considering the fact that we gave the same instructions that Sorenson gave to student teachers from a different university fifteen years earlier, the results were remarkably similar.

About 60 percent of our student teachers suggested that the way to get an "A" was to establish good rapport with one's cooperating teacher (22 percent thought that good rapport with the college supervisor was important, and only 16 percent were concerned about rapport with the building principal and students). Another 54 percent of the respondents noted the importance of planning instruction, and teaching with some attention to creativity (18 percent). About 20 percent advised soliciting and accepting ideas from cooperating teachers, and doing so with a positive attitude. Another 18 percent of the respondents suggested that it was wise to know the evaluation criteria and forms to be used in evaluation in advance, and to attend regularly the university seminar that accompanies student teaching. In addition to these admonitions to their best friends, 10 to 15 percent of the respondents advised concentrating on discipline (being firm and fair), and acting and dressing like a professional. Given these responses, Sorenson's conclusion seems as appropriate today as it did fifteen years ago: "generally, evaluation of student teachers is based upon the most subjective factors."

If criteria for evaluation clinical experiences are far from explicit, they also appear to be far from strict. Joyce et. al. (1977) note that on the average only three percent of student teachers fail evaluations of clinical experiences. The most frequently cited reasons for even this small percentage of failures were personal or emotional problems of the students. Equating failure rate with the degree of rigor of evaluations is somewhat questionable, however. We could find no evidence suggesting how many people drop out or are counseled out of preservice programs, thus avoiding the visible trappings of failure.

Why are evaluations of clinical activities so subjective and so easy to pass? Griffen (1983) and his colleagues suggested that at least part of the reason is that there is no agreed-upon body of knowledge which can be used to make decisions about students' performances. In their comprehensive study of the practice of student teaching in two universities, Griffen et. al. found that performance ratings given student teachers (by students themselves, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors) were uniformly high and the variability of these ratings was quite low. Apparently people agree that student teachers perform competently, but at the same time they have difficulty defining what "competently" means. Griffen and his colleagues noted that it was a rare occurrence for participants in

student teaching programs to agree on, or even be able to articulate, the policies and practices which were supposed to guide student teaching. Furthermore, they found only "minimal evidence" that student teaching programs were integrated substantively or ideologically into the universities' preservice programs of instruction.

Testing for Certification Concerns about the effectiveness of the evaluation of teachers has led to the rapid growth of teacher competency testing as an additional condition for professional employment. Although some localities and states have been using teacher examinations for many years, recent interest appears to be stimulated at least in part by Florida legislation in 1978 and accelerated by the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in the same year that South Carolina's use of the National Teacher Examinations (NTE) was not discriminatory.

Eighteen states now require some form of testing for teacher certification (Vlaanderen, 1982). Sandefur (1982) has suggested that as many as 37 states are in the process of considering or developing some type of competency testing for teachers. Two states that have lead this movement--Georgia and Oklahoma--have developed evaluation procedures that are used between initial certification and renewal (Ellett and Capie, 1982), but most states assess competence prior to initial certification.

The most commonly used measures of teacher assessment are the NTE and measures of English proficiency (Hathaway, 1980). The NTE measured three areas: general knowledge, professional knowledge, and subject area knowledge. The assessment of general knowledge and professional knowledge is reported by a single score, the Weighted Commons Examination Total (WCET), and the assessment of subject knowledge is reported in terms of a separate area examination score. [1]Measures of English proficiency typically include grammar, spelling, and punctuation ability assessed through essay examinations, and are usually developed locally by large school districts.

The methods used to assess teacher competence indicates a threefold purpose in these evaluations: (1) assurance of basic

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1. The new "core battery" on the NTE is being tested for the purpose of replacing the Commons Examination. This revision appears to move the NTE away from strict assessment of knowledge toward the assessment of a teacher's skills.

competence in standard English, (2) assurance of general cultural literacy, and (3) assurance of an acceptable level of knowledge about educational principles and concepts. The level of competence deemed acceptable is, in all cases, set by the state or the locality doing the evaluation. Evaluation results are used summatively to grant or deny certification. In many cases applicants are permitted to retake the examinations, but there is rarely any diagnostic feedback.

Evaluation for Hiring The final step in the evaluation process comes at the point of transition between preservice and inservice. As Merritt (1971) noted:

> "The selection process in education may be classified into two major activities. First, the administrator reviews the placement folder of a teacher candidate in order to see if he meets the qualifications of the position. Then, if the candidate possesses the necessary qualifications, the administrator may invite him for a personal interview in order to 'find out what he is like'... (p. 1)"

In his review of the research on selection interviews, Mayfield (1964) reached several rather important conclusions. Generally, an interviewer is consistent in his approach to different interviewees, and interrater agreement is fairly high. Material to be covered in interviews, however, is not always covered consistently. In addition, interviewers tend to give more information than they solicit from interviewees, and the attitudes of interviewers affect their interpretations of what interviewees say (with unfavorable information being more influential than favorable information). According to Mayfield, structured interviews usually provide a higher interrater reliabiliy than do unstructured interviews, but the validity of interviews is questionable, i.e., the power of interviews to predict job success is not particularly high.

From an evaluation perspective, the important questions about interviews for hiring are: What new information is gathered at the interview stage and how is it used in decision making? According to Merritt (1971) the answers to these questions are probably "not much" and "poorly." Merritt asked administrators to review qualifications of prospective teachers and to interview them. Following the interviews, the administrators rated all

candidates. Merritt selected two variables as potential predictors of these ratings: candidates' qualifications for the position and the congruence between the candidates and the administrators' general attitudes. Although the findings show that candidates with high qualifications and attitudes congruent with the administrator's were given the highest ratings, they also show that candidates with low qualifications but congruent attitudes were given significantly higher ratings than candidates with high qualifications and dissimilar attitudes. Thus, attitudes similarity seemed to be more important in the teacher selection process than the teacher candidates's qualifications. Furthermore, given the low interrater reliability of interviewers' ratings (Mayfield, 1964), the interview appears to add little or no valid information. If Merritt's results generalize, it would seem that useful evaluation information is lost (not gathered or used) at this stage of the evaluation process.

Three Types of Preservice Teacher Evaluation Some of the goals and methods of preservice teacher evaluation are obvious, some not so obvious, and others that might logically be expected to be there or missing altogether. Preservice teacher evaluation--like Eisner's (1979) characterization of educational curricula--can be characterized as explicit (intentional), implicit (unintentional), and null (missing).

Not surprisingly, little is known about explicit evaluation of self and of teaching as a career before formal admission to teacher preparation programs. Certainly the self-reports of teachers provide some clues, but characterizing this first step of preservice teacher evaluation in terms of what is explicit is probably misleading; people do not wear their reasons or the processes by which they decided to enter education on their sleeves, nor do they always recall the real reasons why they decided to become teachers. But it does seem appropriate to consider how people "consciously" evaluate their potentials as teachers.

It may be that the whims of parents, siblings, or guidance counselors weigh heavily in the process of self and career evaluation while the influences of facts about earning potential, availability of jobs and mobility are negligible--or in some cases, just the opposite. If Sykes (1981) is correct in his assessment, (and there is little reason to doubt him), there are more factors militating against entering teaching than ever before. This possibility would seem to be underscored when the popular press reports, as it did recently, that increasing numbers of inservice teachers plan to leave the field as soon as possible (Macnow, 1982).

Indeed, people can probably more easily find information that pans teaching than they can find reasons for becoming a teacher.

Explicit evaluation of formal preservice teacher education, from the point of admission to the point of graduation/certification, consists of the public purposes and methods of appraisal. All programs, to varying degrees, communicate what students will be held accountable for, how their performances will be assessed, and how the results of such assessments will be used to make decisions about progress. As we noted earlier the explicit purposes and procedures of preservice teacher evaluation appear to be fairly limited. Explicit evaluation for admission is largely a matter of examining grade point averages, scores on tests of scholastic aptitude, and occasionally performances on tests of English proficiency. During professional training, presumably students take and pass examinations on course content and write papers on various topics which provide information on their intellectual capabilities. Although other measures of students' abilities to apply knowledge during clinical experiences may be used they do not often appear to be made public. Explicit evaluation for graduation and certification consists of counting credits, averaging course grades, and, in an increasing number of states, giving a standardized examination on teaching knowledge.

At the point of hiring, explicit evaluation is again narrowly focused. Beyond the obvious considerations of certification and some attention to recommendations during initial screening, evaluation for hiring appears to be largely a subjective process. Apparently some efforts are being made to change the status quo through the use of structured interviews, but the extent to which they are used and the validity and utility of these efforts remain to be demonstrated.

In short, it would seem that preservice teacher education programs evaluate explicitly students' general knowledge and verbal abilities through paper-and-pencil measures and do little else. Where other evaluation methods are used--such as interviews for admission and observation of clinical experiences during training and hiring interviews for hiring--the purposes of these evaluations, and the methods themselves, appear to be directed toward confirming evaluators' own ideas about good teaching.

In contract to explicit evaluation, the implicit evaluation of preservice teachers is by its very nature difficult to discern. One possible way of detecting what is valued implicitly and assessed during the course of teacher education is to examine the evaluation methods themselves. When evaluation methods are

incongruent with stated objectives, they are assessing something other than that for which they were designed. If, for example, teacher educators claim to appraise preservice teachers' abilities to apply principles of teaching and learning, while relying only on students' written work or their scores on paper-and pencil tests to make decisions about student progress, one must assume that what is being evaluated is student ability to write and take tests, not the ability to apply knowledge as professionals do in the course of their work (Medley, 1982). Where evaluation methods are even less precise than those prescribed by tests or assignments --as apparently in the case in preservice teachers' clinical work and at the point of hiring--the evaluator is in a real sense the method. Here, proficiency is determined by how well people "measure up" to the attitudes and values of the evaluator. Success is largely dependent on teachers' abilities to conform to the tacit expectations of the evaluator.

Another way to examine what is implicit in evaluation is to try to ferret out the criteria that are actually used to determine successful program completion. Preservice programs are supposed to help beginners get a start; that is, to teach without doing great injury to their students' bodies and minds. No one even remotely in touch with reality would claim that a first-year teacher--let alone a student teacher--should be held accountable for much more than demonstrating some basic teaching skills, surviving, and not wasting pupils' time. Yet it seems that pre-service teacher education often suffers "programmatic schizophrenia." Some teacher educators try to produce "scholors," while others are intent on teaching students how to make bulletin boards for all occasions. As a result, the implicit criteria for student success --a mix of unspoken and not infrequently contraditory ideas--may contribute to the confusion about how best to play the role of beginning teacher.

The implicit evaluation of knowledge and attitudes generally occurs whenever ratings are used in the evaluation process or whenever subjectivity is a factor. General knowledge is most probably an implicit criterion at every stage of the evaluation process where subjectivity is at all involved because "well educated" people create favorable impressions in the teaching profession. General knowledge also is an implicit criterion--in the guise of general academic ability--whenever traditional tests are used in course work evaluation. Subject matter knowledge is another implicit criterion because it too creates a favorable impression, and thus tends to produce a halo-effect whenever evaluations are subjective. Implicit attitude criteria, as noted are most often idiosyncratic and are predominant in the evaluation of clinical work and evaluation for hiring. Certain

widely respected attitudes that are not quite requisite "professional attitudes," however, provide common implicit criteria, such as attitudes associated with clean grooming, politeness, and effort.

Identifying the null evaluation criteria is a matter of selecting from all criteria not used those that are most important. Consequently, any list of null evaluation criteria is likely to be highly subjective. One way to avoid complete subjectivity is to identify those criteria that are purported to be included in teacher preparation programs but not used, and hence not truly explicit or implicit. There appear to be several such criteria.

Professional people--physicians, attorneys, teachers, and the like--are expected not only to profess their knowledge, but to apply it in order to help their clients. Teachers, for example, must be able to recognize problems or particular situations when they arise in classrooms. They must be able to weigh the importance of these problems in terms of some set of professional values. Having done so, teachers must draw upon that professional knowledge relevant to their situations, i.e., knowledge that suggests how best to deal with particular situations. And finally, they must behave in ways that are consistent with such professional knowledge; that is, teachers must be able to apply what they know for the purpose of improving the conditions of learning. Although training programs typically claim to develop such skills, knowledge, and values in their participants, rarely do they provide for the assessment of teachers' abilities to apply what they have learned in any systematic way.

Furthermore, teacher educators do not appear to assess how students learn--how they evaluate their own abilities to process information and to make decisions. Students are not given information, either in summative or formative fashion, regarding their abilities to view teaching-learning problems from a variety of perspectives. Nor are students provided feedback on how they make decisions vis-a-vis other points of view (except perhaps on the occasional test question that asks them to "compare and contrast..."). The result may be that although individual teacher educators can encourage preservice teachers to think in complex ways and to grow toward independence in decision making, teacher education programs do not appear to assess such capabilities in students. Unfortunately, this evaluational oversight may later limit teachers' abilities to assess their own performances on the job, and thereby limit their potentials to learn from their work.

Ignoring preservice teachers' abilities to recognize conflicting points of view and to make decisions is only one example of the null evaluation in preservice teacher education; there are others. In training for a profession one might expect, for instance, to find greater emphasis on evaluating people's abilities to use knowledge to solve real-life problems or greater emphasis on assessing program participants' abilities to create a range of teaching environments to fit their clients' needs. But these areas, too, appear to be largely absent from preservice teacher evaluation.

Recommendations If our analysis is anywhere close to being an accurate reflection of the present state of preservice teacher evaluation, there are several problems which demand immediate attention:

1. Teacher educators must reexamine what they hold prospective teachers accountable for and how they make their assessments. Objectives that are explicit should be questionned with respect to their relationship to teaching practice. Those that are implicit should, to the degree possible, be made visible so that they, too, can be examined publicly. Only when this is done will it be possible to examine fully what objectives are not being evaluated and how they might be addressed.

2. More information is needed on evaluation practices in that component which we have referred to as "professional coursework." Particularly studies need to be conducted that try to determine the degree to which recall and comprehension of coursework vs. the application of knowledge are being assessed.

3. If, as we suspect, the evaluation of general knowledge and basic skills recurs during training far beyond what could reasonably be considered useful, then these criteria should, as others have suggested, be assessed at the admissions stage and downplayed later. Because the economics of higher education serves to discourage this, however, state legislatures, state education departments or accreditation agencies must consider ways of raising certification and/or accreditation standards.

4. Explicit criteria used to assess clinical work appear to be weak. Institutions should adopt specific criteria for these evaluations and use evaluation methods that are more objective than those typically used in conducting such assessments.

5. Amazingly little attention appears to be given to formative evaluation, especially at the stages of professional coursework and clinical work when it could be most useful. It would seem that program participants and programs themselves would be well served by concentrating greater efforts on examining the needs and abilities of preservice teachers and providing information to them for the purpose of improving their performances during the course of their education.

Table 1

PHASES AND STEPS OF PRESERVICE TEACHER EVALUATION

I. Before formal entry into a teacher education program

A. Evaluation of self and of teaching as a career

B. Admission decisions

II. During the course of participation in a teacher program

A. Decisions about professional coursework

B. Decisions about clinical work

III. Immediately following participation in a teacher program

A. Graduation and certification decisions

B. Hiring decisions

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